

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2013

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Robert P. George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University and a Visiting Professor at Harvard Law School, was elected today as Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). Professor George was appointed to the Commission in 2012 by Speaker of the House John Boehner and is serving his first term as a Commissioner.

Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett, USCIRF's outgoing Chair and an appointee of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, announced Professor George's selection. "I have been honored to work alongside Professor George this past year in the struggle to guarantee religious freedom abroad for people of every faith and shade of belief. He is a true human rights champion whose compassion for victims of oppression and wisdom about international religious freedom shine through all we have accomplished this past year. Our bipartisan Commission is united in its admiration for Professor George's skills as an advocate and leader of the international religious freedom movement. The Commission is eager to continue its work under his able leadership."

Commenting on his election as Chair of USCIRF, George said, "I am deeply honored that my colleagues have entrusted me with this position of leadership. I have big shoes to fill: Dr. Lantos Swett is a visionary leader who brings people together and empowers them in support of international religious freedom. As our leader, she tirelessly and effectively promoted this most

fundamental of human rights. It will be my constant endeavor to live up to her outstanding example as USCIRF works to ensure that the cause of religious freedom, understood in its most robust sense, is given the high priority it deserves in the formation and execution of U.S. foreign policy. While much has been accomplished, much remains to be done.”

Prior to joining USCIRF, George served on the President’s Council on Bioethics and as a presidential appointee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. He also has served on UNESCO’s World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He is a former Judicial Fellow at the Supreme Court of the United States where he received the Justice Tom C. Clark Award.

Professor George is a recipient of many notable honors, including the United States Presidential Citizens Medal and the Honorific Medal for Human Rights of the Republic of Poland.

An award winning teacher at Princeton, George is a prolific writer in the areas of moral and political philosophy, philosophy of law, and constitutional law and theory. His most recent book is *Conscience and Its Enemies* (ISI Books, 2013). His scholarly articles have appeared in the *Harvard Law Review*, the *Yale Law Journal*, the *Columbia Law Review*, and other leading journals of law, philosophy, and political science. His writings also have appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*

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Wall Street Journal
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National Review
, the
Boston Review
, and the
Times Literary Supplement
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A graduate of Swarthmore College and Harvard Law School, George holds a master's degree in theology from Harvard and a doctorate in philosophy of law from Oxford University, as well as honorary doctorates of law, letters, science, ethics, divinity, civil law, humane letters, and juridical science.

Also on July 23, two USCIRF Commissioners, M. Zuhdi Jasser and Dr. Lantos Swett, were elected as Vice-Chairs.

M. Zuhdi Jasser, appointed by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell in March 2012, is serving his first term on the Commission. He is president and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy which advocates for the preservation of the founding principles of the U.S. Constitution, liberty and freedom, through the separation of mosque and state. He is also a founding member of the American Islamic Leadership Coalition which represents a diverse group of reform minded American Muslim leaders. The son of Syrian immigrants, Dr. Jasser is a former Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy where he served 11 years. Dr. Jasser is a nationally recognized expert who is widely published and has spoken at hundreds of national and international events and given testimony to Congress on the value of the centrality of religious liberty in the contest of ideas within Islam. Dr. Jasser is the author of *A Battle for the*

Soul of Islam

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nd a physician currently in private practice in Phoenix Arizona specializing in internal medicine and nuclear cardiology.

Dr. Lantos Swett, also serving her first term at USCIRF, is President of the Lantos Foundation. As President of the foundation, which was founded in 2008, she works to carry on the human rights legacy of her father, the late Representative Tom Lantos, the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to Congress. Dr. Lantos Swett teaches human rights and American foreign policy at Tufts University. She also served as Deputy Counsel to the Criminal Justice Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee for then-Senator Joe Biden.